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- NEWS RELEASE -

## **BYSIEWICZ: END OF PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR REFORM**

### ROTATING REGIONAL PRIMARY PLAN WOULD PROVIDE ORDER TO CHAOTIC NOMINATING CALENDAR

**HARTFORD:** Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz, a member of the National Association of Secretaries of the State (NASS) Subcommittee on Presidential Primaries, says now is the time for the Democratic and Republican parties to reform the way they choose nominees for President of the United States. Sec. Bysiewicz is calling on both parties to adopt the NASS rotating regional primary plan.

“The time to reform the process is now!” said Bysiewicz. “Though we saw unprecedented turnout, excitement, and interest on the part of voters, the 2008 primary contest was marred by states trying to rush to the front of the line and hold the first contest. To leave the primary calendar the way it is just invites chaos, and the type of inter-state competition that led to the contested delegations in Florida and Michigan. I call on both parties to bring sense to the process and adopt this reform plan this summer.”

The NASS proposal divides the country into four geographic areas — Eastern, Southern, Midwestern and Western—and rotates each region to vote first beginning in March. The other regions would hold their primary elections in April, May and June. Under this system a state could hold its primary at any time during its region’s selected month. A different part of the country would vote first every sixteen years. New Hampshire and Iowa would retain their early status to allow under-funded and less widely known

candidates to compete through retail politics rather than the costly media driven campaigns required in larger states.

The NASS Rotating Regional Presidential Primaries Plan is the only reform proposal with bipartisan support from federal, state, and local elected officials. In addition to the National Lieutenant Governors Association endorsement, the Council of State Governments has taken a position in support of the plan. The NASS plan was also endorsed by a 2005 blue-ribbon panel, the Commission on Federal Election Reform, co-chaired by former President Jimmy Carter and former Secretary of State James A. Baker, III. U.S. Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Lamar Alexander (R-TN), and Joseph Lieberman (I-CT) are chief sponsors of federal legislation that mirrors the NASS plan, the Regional Primaries Act of 2007.

The Republican Party limits reform discussions to one short window of time every four years, at its nominating conventions. The Democratic Party is free to take up the issue at any time.